



**U. S. Department of Justice**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**PRESS RELEASE**  
***INDICTMENT UNSEALED CHARGING  
COMPANY WITH HARBORING ILLEGAL ALIENS;  
INDIVIDUAL ALSO CHARGED WITH  
ENCOURAGING WORKERS TO STAY IN UNITED  
STATES ILLEGALLY***

SALT LAKE CITY – Two indictments unsealed today in Salt Lake City charge a Lindon, Utah, company and its human resource director with harboring illegal aliens and encouraging or inducing workers to stay in the United States illegally.

The first indictment charges Universal Industrial Sales, Inc., of Lindon with 10 counts of harboring illegally aliens, all of whom have been or are employees of the company, knowing or in reckless disregard of the fact that these individuals had come into and remained in the United States in violation of federal law. The indictment alleges the company concealed,

harbored or shielded the workers from detection for commercial advantage. The indictment, which lists unidentified workers, relates to conduct occurring between January 2003 and December 2006. A summons has been issued to the company to appear for an initial appearance in federal court at 10 a.m. on Feb. 26, 2008. The potential maximum penalty for each count in the indictment is a fine of \$500,000 or twice the amount of any pecuniary gain stemming from the offense, whichever is greater.

According to its website, Universal Industrial Sales, Inc., was founded in 1978 and employs more than 100 individuals. The company manufactures guardrails, bridge rails, and sign structures, among other things.

The second indictment charges Alejandro “Alex” Urrutia-Garcia, age 39, of Provo, with two counts of encouraging or inducing illegal aliens to remain in the United States unlawfully. Urrutia-Garcia, a naturalized U.S. citizen, is the human resource director at Universal Industrial Sales. He was arrested this morning during a law enforcement action at the company. The maximum potential penalty for the charges in this indictment is 10 years in prison per count. Urrutia-Garcia will appear for an initial appearance in federal court today at 2:30 p.m. before U.S. Magistrate Judge David Nuffer.

Individuals and companies charged in federal criminal indictments are presumed innocent unless or until proven guilty in court.

Several local and federal agencies assisted with the law enforcement action today in Utah County.

“The investigation and prosecution of employers who violate our nation’s immigration laws by hiring illegal workers is an important component of a comprehensive immigration strategy which involves apprehending and prosecuting those illegally in the country and those who facilitate the continued unlawful presence of such individuals,” U.S. Attorney Brett L. Tolman said today. “Today’s action should send a clear message to employers in Utah. We expect employers to comply with immigration laws in hiring employees. Failure to comply with these laws hampers our ability to address illegal immigration issues,” Tolman said.

“While our country’s immigration laws must be recognized and vigorously enforced, we understand that the individuals taken into custody

today may have families who have been in the United States for lengthy periods of time. Strictly enforcing immigration laws and having compassion for the families of those involved are not mutually exclusive. We have encouraged ICE to consider and address humanitarian issues as they interview these workers and are confident they are taking steps to do so,” Tolman said.

Tolman praised the efforts of agencies involved in the investigation of the case, including ICE and the Social Security. “It is not always easy to find those inside a business who may be facilitating the violation of federal immigration laws,” Tolman said.

“This arrest sends the clear message that we will pursue criminal charges against those who knowingly or recklessly hire illegal aliens,” said Jeffrey Copp, Special Agent in Charge of the ICE Office of Investigations in Denver. “Working in partnership with the U.S. Attorney’s Office, ICE has made it a priority to pursue criminal charges.”

Approximately 50 individuals have been taken into ICE custody as of 11 a.m. Thursday morning. (Editor’s note: Number will be updated later as firm numbers become available.) These workers are being interviewed by ICE agents and health professionals with ICE’s Division of Immigration Health Services to determine if they have any medical, sole-caregiver, or other humanitarian-related issues. Each worker also will be screened to identify any urgent medical needs. The information gathered during this process will assist ICE in making a determination about whether to detain the individual or permit a conditional humanitarian release. ICE also is coordinating with other agencies, including the Utah Health and Human Rights Project and the Utah Division of Child and Family Services.

Workers taken into custody today on administrative immigration violations are being interviewed, photographed, fingerprinted, and processed by immigration officials. There are no federal arrest warrants or criminal charges associated with the workers at the present time.

Family members of workers arrested in the operation today can call a toll-free hotline number to get information about the detention status and removal process. The toll-free hotline number is 1-866-341-3858.

Since its establishment in 2003, ICE has dramatically enhanced its efforts to combat the unlawful employment of illegal aliens in this country. As a part of this strategy, ICE is targeting unscrupulous employers by seeking criminal prosecutions and forfeiture of businesses' assets.

In fiscal year 2007, ICE made more than 4,900 arrests in connection with worksite enforcement investigations, including 863 involving criminal violations. That represents a 45-fold increase in criminal worksite arrests compared to fiscal year 2001. In addition, ICE obtained more than \$31 million in criminal fines, restitutions, and civil judgments in fiscal year 2007 as a result of worksite related enforcement actions.

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